



BEAR FACTS

IDAHO CONSERVATION OFFICER NEWSLETTER

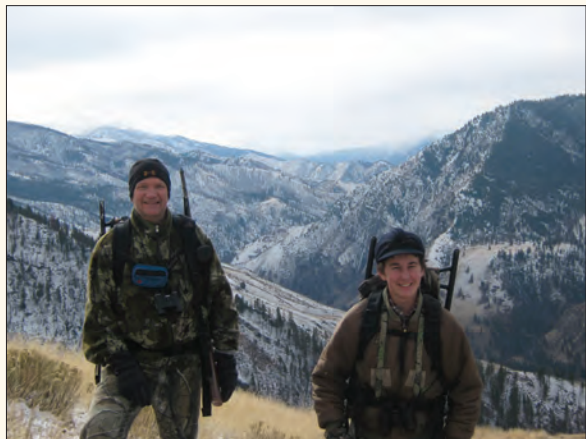
From the Chief

Another fall is over. This was my 26th hunting season as a game warden. The last eight years have been viewed from behind this desk. For the most part of those eight years, I live vicariously through the reports I read and stories I hear from our officers in the field. It was with mixed feelings that some reported their slowest fall in their careers. That's good if it means there were few violations detected. That's not so good if that means harvest was down.

Later on you will read some stories of a not so slow fall. Stories that reached around the globe, telling of a long history of shenanigans and the length of time it took to catch up to them. And their deeds did finally catch up to them and they paid the price. It's unfortunate that there are those who are all too willing to cheat in order to steal your wildlife.

My fall story does not have a slow ending. My hunting partners and I flew into the backcountry for the ninth year in a row. For the past two years, Scott's son, Jacob, was finally old enough to hunt with us. This was his third year as a hunter and now big enough to pack his own critter off the hill (and ours too if everything goes as planned).

After landing we packed our gear the two miles to our camp. Within 75 yards of camp, a 4x4 muley stood up right in front of us. I looked at Jake and him at me and I said, "This is just wrong. It's not right to be done so early." So we put our heads down and trudged into camp. Wow, it's going to be a great hunt this year. For the next two days we never saw another legal buck. We climbed higher than ever before. We walked back to camp in the dark with head lamps. Maybe that buck near camp wasn't all that wrong.



A little snow fell that second night and by noon the next day Jacob found a nice little 3x3 buck to take home. He even packed the front half back to camp. On our return trek to camp, we met up with a family we've seen back there for several years now. The nonresident father came there five years ago with his 13-year-old son on a mentored youth hunt. I remember doing an airstrip hunter check and checking the youngster's first ever deer, his father being more proud than anything. This year they were excited to see how we were and check Jake's deer. Then the son, now 18 and twice as tall, told us of the 4x4 deer he tagged earlier in the day not too far from our camp up on the bench. Oh well, it probably still wasn't right for us to bag a deer on day one even before we set up camp.



The following day, late in the afternoon, high on the hill Scott found some deer and said, “Jon, your buck is there. Start climbing.” All that time in the gym, running and biking, paid off as we tramped up the steep side canyon. It was dark by the time we drug the deer down the hill, field dressed and packed it back to camp. Jacob packed his second front half of a deer back the couple of miles to camp in the dark.

We had one day left in our trip. The weather was holding. That is, it was really nice to fly out, but the snow was not going to be pushing too many deer around. This year we started our hunt a couple of weeks earlier than in the past. Last year’s hunt, or camping experience, was extended an extra five days because of a winter storm keeping planes grounded. Jake’s mom would not tolerate another year of additional missed school days.

It was a blue bird day. We had packed the first two deer down to the airstrip to save us some time for the next morning’s flight out. After an early lunch, Scott decided it was time to look for his deer. We hiked up the canyon three or four miles not seeing many deer and no bucks. Before the trail started to climb steep into the heavens, we sat down leaning against some rocks with our binoculars in hand. It wasn’t long before Scott and I were sawing logs. Finally Jacob woke us as he spotted some deer and bedded down with them was a nice buck! Wow, another steep canyon wall climb. “Really, are we really going after him Scott?” It seemed like forever as Scott crawled his way into shooting position and even longer for the crack of the rifle to echo off the canyon walls. But it wasn’t near as long as Jake and I sat there with our binoculars on the downed deer waiting for Scott to climb up to him and confirm that it was okay for us to go home now. What an afternoon! In the background was Middle Fork peak and below us was four plus miles of downhill trailing us back to camp, with Jake’s third front half of a deer load, and then out to the airfield and back home the next morning. Not bad for a slow year.



We have not always filled all our tags every year. As it was, this was the first time Scott, Jake and I all filled. But that’s not the point. Earlier when Jacob’s mom was hesitant to tempt the weather and miss more school days, Scott said, “Why don’t you find somebody else and go back there this year. We can’t afford to miss more school days like we did last year” (and two years before that). It’s not about filling tags I told Scott. I’d rather go in early before the snow comes in order to continue our tradition. If that meant cutting short our chances to find more deer, then so be it. Besides, Jake was my best man in my wedding last spring and I wasn’t going hunting without him.

I wish you all a Happy New Year. Whether your fall hunting season was ‘slow’ or not, I hope you had opportunity to find time to spend it in the outdoors with friends and family, continuing traditions and creating memories.

And if you ever witness someone stealing our wildlife, regardless of which corner of the world they live in, please do not hesitate to call the Citizens Against Poaching hotline, 1-800-632-5999. We can’t stop poaching alone. We need your help.

Jon Heggen
Enforcement Chief



Most Common Waterfowl Violations:

- Fail to purchase the Federal Migratory Bird Stamp and/or Federal Migratory Game Bird Harvest Information Program validation, both of which are required to hunt migratory birds. For specific license, stamps, and validations refer to page 18, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Fail to validate the Federal Migratory Bird Stamp by signing in ink. Refer to page 18, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Possess and use a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler. Refer to page 18, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Take more than the daily bag limit. Note: limit can change year to year but for 2011 refer to pages 6 and 7 for dark goose and snow goose limits, and refer to page 8 for duck limits, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Possess more waterfowl than allowed. Refer to page 19 for Federal Limits, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Fail to leave species identification on the migratory bird during transportation from place where taken to personal abode of the possessor or a migratory bird preservation facility. Refer to page 19, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Fail to comply with lawful shooting hours. Refer to pages 10-12, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Take migratory bird during closed season. Refer to pages 6-8, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Fail to properly identify migratory birds by taking more of a species or sex than permitted. Refer to pages 14-17, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.
- Use and possess shot other than non-toxic shot. Refer to page 18, 2011 Waterfowl Rules.

Steelhead Fishing in Boundary Waters

A reminder to anglers!

An angler fishing the confluence cannot legally card three steelhead on his Idaho license/card and three steelhead on his Washington license/card on the same day. See page 40 of the 2011-2012 Fishing Rules and see IDAPA below.

IDAPA 13.01.11.345.03. Limit for One License Only. Any angler who fishes on the Snake River or any other water forming an Idaho boundary is entitled to have in possession only the limit allowed by one (1) license regardless of the number of licenses he may possess.

An angler was checked who was in possession of two steelhead. One he carded on his Washington card and the other on his Idaho card. Senior Conservation Officers Eric Crawford and David Beaver explained to him that he could card the fish on either states' license/card but when he kept one more steelhead, he was finished for the day.

Citizens Against Poaching

2011 was another good year for Citizen's Against Poaching (CAP). Through the All West call center CAP averages approximately 3,600 total calls per year with 629 calls reporting violations in 2011. The 629 violation calls produced 103 citations paying out \$18,600 in rewards. CAP can now be followed on Facebook and



Twitter. We are slowly gathering more interest but it has not been as active as I had hoped. We have nearly 140 followers on Facebook and very few followers on Twitter. Hopefully this next year we see an increase.

In November 2011, All West closed their call center in Boise, Idaho and they are now handling all our calls from their center in Utah. There have been some growing pains but it is improving.



Headquarters News



Enforcement Assistant Chief Greg Wooten will be spending the next year in Afghanistan. Lt. Col Greg Wooten, US Army Reserve, started his deployment on November 30, 2011. Greg completed his final prep in the states and was deployed to Afghanistan between Christmas and New Years.

He is an Engineer and his specific mission for the next year is that of construction management. Similar to a general contractor, his small unit oversees construction of infrastructure in Afghanistan mostly done by other engineer units and some contract or civilian workers.

God speed and a quick and safe return home Greg!



Pictured above from left to right: Enforcement Assistant Chief Greg Wooten and new POST graduates Chris Rowley, Kyle Christopher, Tim Klucken and Jake Leal.

We hired four new conservation officers in August. Idaho's Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council requires all peace officers to complete a ten week basic academy. The strenuous curriculum focuses on the foundation of knowledge and practical skills necessary for patrol duties.

Tim Klucken (Upper Snake Region), Kyle Christopher (Clearwater Region), Chris Rowley (Southwest Region), and Jake Leal (Southeast Region) graduated from POST Academy in Meridian on November 18. Our officers stood out at POST as some of the top performers. All four finished in the top seven of the class and received the following special awards:

Kyle Christopher	Top Cop (Top In His Class) Fitness Possible, Sharp Shooter
Chris Rowley	Vice President, EVOC Top Driver, Fitness Excellence
Tim Klucken	Fitness Possible
Jake Leal	Sharp Shooter

These officers will continue their training by attending a one week mini-academy taught by Idaho Fish and Game enforcement officers and personnel. They will also take part in a ten week Field Training Evaluation Program (FTEP).

Welcome and congratulations to our new officers!!



Arrest Digest

Panhandle Region

During the September elk archery season, Senior Conservation Officer Matt Haag discovered an area baited with apples and hay.



After checking on the site repeatedly during the next three days, he found Mr. S. in a treestand overlooking the bait. Mr. S. was armed with a bow and a pistol. He stated that he was bear hunting, but that he had not purchased a bear tag or a bear bait permit. Wearing a cow elk call around his neck, he denied that he was trying to kill an elk. Mr. S. stated that he wanted to kill the wolf that would be attracted to the elk that his bait and cow call would entice. The man actually did have a nonresident hunting license and nonresident wolf tag. He stated that he could not afford a nonresident elk tag. Haag explained that he could not hunt elk over any bait, and could not hunt bear over an unpermitted bait. Haag also mentioned that he had never seen a bear bait comprised of the exact items that would attract elk. Mr. S. was issued a citation for hunting big game over an unlawful bait.

During November's general deer season Senior Conservation Officer Jerry Hugo received information that Smith and Jones had previously killed a 4x4 white-tailed deer, and had snuck it home untagged. Since the information was too old to act on, and Hugo was familiar with Smith and his hunting habits, Hugo focused

his patrol efforts accordingly over the following days. Three days later, Hugo contacted Jones in the same area. Jones now had a large 5x5 white-tailed deer that had just been killed. This deer was tagged. When confronted by Hugo, Jones confessed to killing another deer a few days earlier and not tagging it. Jones further stated that the deer was hanging in Smith's garage. Off went Hugo and Jones to Smith's house. Hugo had two other IDFG officers join him as they made contact with Smith. Smith agreed to allow Hugo to see the 4x4 deer that was hanging in his garage, just as Jones had said it would be. Smith told Hugo that his memory escaped him, when asked about the day he and Jones brought the 4x4 home. Both Smith and Jones received misdemeanor citations, but later, the prosecutor agreed to pursue felony charges against Jones, for the unlawful killing and possession of more than one animal in a one-year period. This case is pending in court.



A different Mr. Smith advertised repeatedly on Craig's List as a taxidermist. He had business cards and charged customers for his taxidermy work. Maintenance of proper records by taxidermists is required by law and is essential to protect a legal taxidermist from being implicated in a crime should an animal he or she takes in be unlawful, unbeknownst to him or her.

Smith was not a licensed taxidermist and did not keep records on the wildlife he took in for taxidermy services. A set of white-tailed deer antlers was provided for a plaque mount. While at Smith's house, he boasted of illegally killing a deer mounted on his wall in Washington State. Other taxidermy work that Smith



was working on was also noticed. Smith completed the taxidermy work on the white-tailed buck for which he was paid \$100, as he requested. We obtained a search warrant for his residence relative to his taxidermy business. Several mule deer and white-tailed deer antlers were seized due to being unlawfully taken in Washington.

On December 31, 2011, Smith was cited for one count of practicing taxidermy for hire without a license and five counts of possession of wildlife taken in violation of other laws. Washington Fish and Wildlife officers are also pursuing charges against Smith.

Clearwater Region

Senior Conservation Officer John McLain gets the great catch award for the week by catching two guys standing in their salt lick looking for an arrow after they shot at an elk. McLain walked in and stood in their blind while they were looking for the arrow. I wish I could have seen their faces when they turned around. They claimed that they didn't know the salt was there and were as surprised as McLain when they walked forward to retrieve their arrow.

Senior Conservation Officer John McLain cited his fellow who was hunting over salt and spent some time patrolling this past week. McLain has also been helping Senior Conservation Officer Eric Crawford with a baited treestand and turned over some great intel. Crawford has been working several salts and baits, and commented that he was amazed at the number of salts in this country.

District Conservation Officer Barry Cummings worked the fair last week and helped Senior Conservation Officer John McLain finish up an elk case from a year ago. Tough one to solve but after four interviews (two by McLain and 2 by Cummings) Cummings finally got the shooter to confess. McLain knew what happened all along and was correct. It just took some time to get to the bottom. A Nez Perce tribal member covered the illegal elk and that made it even more difficult. Citations to follow.

District Conservation Officer Barry Cummings reports that the entire district did a saturation patrol on the

Clearwater and Snake rivers in Lewiston Saturday night. "We finished up just after midnight. Two boats and some great contacts. Six citations, three written warnings and I lost count of verbal warnings. Everything ranging from no licenses to uncared steelhead. I appreciate the team effort."

Senior Conservation Officer Jim Roll is swamped with his bear poaching case, yet he broke away to work several trespass/drive-by shootings, a spotlighted wasted large mule deer buck, and a large litter case.

Senior Conservation Officers Jim Roll, Jim Pagel, Roger Westfall, the Clearwater Regional Investigator and the ICSO SRT team completed a search warrant on one of our frequent fliers on Sunday evening. ICSO did the entry and secured the suspects. Our teams worked great together. It's a very convoluted case but it involved the possession of an untagged deer killed in a "drive-by" on private property.

Senior Conservation Officer John McLain applied for and received a warrant to seize the Weippe elk from the case he made on opening morning. The suspects were not surprised when we showed up and took the elk. In doing so, we learned even more about the case. When looking at the elk, we could see lots of dried blood that pooled in the carcass. Blood that would not have been there had they done what they claimed and killed it that morning, hung it and skinned it. Blood that is pooled because it was killed the night before, gutted and hid in the brush.

Senior Conservation Officer Roy Kinner had a great catch as his suspicions were confirmed when he spotted the suspect carrying a little white bucket with him out to his deer blind; a place Kinner can see from his house. Saturday evening Kinner saw the suspect at his blind. Upon contact, Kinner found the suspects with rifles in a blind with corn scattered all around them.

Senior Conservation Officers Jim Pagel and Jim Roll had a report of an individual that had killed an overlimit of elk and was going for more. Pagel set up on a garage where the elk were supposed to be stored. Roll received consent to search the garage and found a untagged cow elk. They cited the suspect that same evening.



Senior Conservation Officer Roy Kinner had a great CAP call. A witness observed Mr. Facey shoot a deer on private property, toss it in a pickup and burn rubber out of the area. Kinner got right on it and found the suspect coming up the grade to

Grangeville. Upon the stop, Kinner got the “what deer” response. Guess the smoking hot deer just jumped into the bed of the truck and died.



Last week Senior Conservation Officer Dave Beaver received a CAP call regarding a picture that appeared in the local newspaper. In the picture was a man posing with a 5x5 bull elk which was tagged with a Palouse B tag and killed on November 6th. The

season for the Palouse B tag closed on October 24. Evidently the gentleman’s wife put the picture in the newspaper as a surprise. What a surprise. The man usually hunts with another gentleman that evidently knows the rules a little better but was gone. The hunter called to turn himself in not realizing the season was closed.



CAP calls are coming in and Senior Conservation Officer Rick Cooper has been fielding many of them. While Cooper was heading to the Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area with Justin Barrett for an impromptu, they noticed someone

had been into the Benton Meadows cabin. When they returned later they learned someone had broken in and stolen some fuel/propane. Cooper found a guy walking about a half mile away who had a lame story about hunting but didn’t have hunting gear. Boot tracks tell his story and the suspect is a convicted felon with a history of burglary.

Once again Senior Conservation Officer Roy Kinner made the case of the week by following up on a grain spinner/salt bait he found last year. Kinner located the suspects with an untagged deer and in a stand hunting over the bait pile/spinner. Great Case!!

Senior Conservation Officer Jim Pagel put together a great case that he had been working on with Regional Conservation Officer Mark Hill since early October. Pagel had some interviews fall in line and there was no other course than to secure the residence and go to Lewis County for a warrant for the Winchester residence of Mitch Stamper. Pagel and Hill gathered a team. Team members secured the residence while Pagel ran with a great warrant template for Lewis County. It was not the highly orchestrated warrant that we have been doing on all our other regional cases but it went off great. Hill’s leadership, Pagel’s tenacity, and the support of the team made it a success. We obtained evidence and statements of four illegal deer taken by one individual; two of which are probably trophy whitetails and one the “headless Winchester buck.”

Senior Conservation Officer Mike Dafoe detected a group of nonresident hunters that he suspected of several violation issues. An artificial simulated animal (ASA) proved that they were going to fill their tags at all costs as they shot the ASA in the headlights of the rig. They also had a deer tagged with a 2008 tag and a few other issues. They seemed like a good group of guys and they have been coming out for years, but got caught up in the killing rather than focusing on the hunting. They were leaving for Michigan two days after the contact so we had to get them in to court quickly. Dafoe followed it closely and was in contact with the prosecutor within hours of the citations. They thanked us and said that they will continue to come to Idaho to hunt and next time will do it correctly.

Senior Conservation Officer Mike Dafoe and District Conservation Officer Barry Cummings suspected a passenger, who was in a vehicle when the driver shot an ASA, of possessing a wrong class license. A little research and they located him in Washington. The officers called Washington Fish and Wildlife and then contacted the individual. He was initially untruthful about moving to Washington. However, when confronted with the information that the officers had gathered, he admitted that he moved to Washington two years ago and was keeping the Idaho post office box and driver’s license in an attempt to buy resident licenses rather than paying the nonresident prices. The officers seized an unlawfully taken deer and while he denied



taking an elk this past fall on his unlawful tags, he called to tell Cummings that he was not truthful and had killed a bull this past fall as well. Waiting to hear back so Magic Valley regional officers can take possession of the antlers. Citations to follow this week.

Senior Conservation Officers Eric Crawford and John McLain and District Conservation Officer Barry Cummings ran a very early ASA on Saturday morning before light. First shooter shot in the headlights of the truck from the window of his vehicle and did not have a deer tag. But his wife, who was sitting next to him in tennis shoes, blue jeans and a light jacket like she was going to the grocery store, did. Guess where the tag would have come from? Shooter claimed that he was shooting to scare the deer away from the road - oops he hit it.

Second shooter, only 15 minutes later, shot in the headlights of the truck from the roadway leaning on the truck and also did not have a valid deer tag as he had already killed a deer two days before. His father was the driver (shooter was about 30 years old) and he had a deer tag. When asked how he was going to tag the deer that he shot, the shooter said he would have used his dad's tag. Driver was cited for principal to for shinning the truck lights on the deer while his son shot it.

Sunday afternoon, Senior Conservation Officers John McLain and Dave Beaver and District Conservation Officer Barry Cummings ran the deer near Orofino and within 30 minutes of getting set up, we had a known violator shoot from the window of the vehicle. The shooter was cited for shooting from a county road and trespassing-posted land. A better look at the video may show that the passenger took the first shot and he was a Washington resident without a tag, although the driver was claiming both shots. Driver has multiple Fish and Game violations.

Dustin Warren and David Gilbert were sentenced this week. A search warrant was served in August on these guys for killing two deer closed season. The penalties were the same for both: 8 days jail to serve, a 10 year license revocation, \$475 civil penalty and meat processing fee, \$345 court costs and fines, and the loss of both of the rifles used. The fact that District

Conservation Officer Barry Cummings caught both of them in 2007 for game violations didn't help them. They learned a lesson as did Cummings. After court the grandmother of one of them walked up and pointed her finger at Cummings and said, "I want to talk with you." Cummings knew that meant she really didn't want to talk and that should have been his clue to move on but he didn't. After a ten minute lecture, which included a warning from the bailiff for her to quiet down, Cummings had to respond when she told him that by citing her grandson he was taking food out of her three-year-old great-grandson's mouth. Cummings shared with her that her grandson had been drinking all day when he decided to kill the deer, that he didn't take all of the meat, that he thought it was funny, and that they were throwing pieces of meat and squirting milk from the lactating doe on others in the barn. She replied "well, he was drunk" as if to say that made it alright. Cummings realized the errors of his ways and walked away, and watched them get into their \$30,000 pickup and drive off. "I am certain she will tell her story to whoever will listen. I just wish it would be the truth."

Southwest Region



Down Under Poaching Suspects Sentenced

Evin Oneale, Regional Conservation Educator, IDFG

What began as an Idaho big game hunting trip for three Australians ended abruptly Tuesday in Elmore County court where two of the men learned that hunting in most of the United States is no longer an option.

All three paid thousands of dollars in fines and restitution, while forfeiting two hunting rifles before the long plane trip back home.

Anton Kapeller, 58, Darren Tubb, 43, and Samuel Henley, 18, all from Tasmania, Australia were contacted and later arrested by Idaho Fish and Game conservation officers on Thursday, November 3, near Atlanta. Eleven charges were filed against the trio; most serious were the charges of killing a six-point bull elk four days before the November 1 opener and leaving the animal to waste.



In an expedited process, the three bonded out of jail six days later and appeared before Magistrate Judge George Hicks for sentencing on Tuesday, November 15.

Kapeller faced six misdemeanor counts, including possession of unlawfully taken elk, and aid/counsel the killing of elk during closed season. He was sentenced to \$5,792 in fines and restitution and a lifetime revocation of hunting and fishing privileges. He also forfeited a hunting rifle used during the trip.

Tubb was charged with three misdemeanors, including killing a bull elk closed season, wasteful destruction of elk and transfer of a big game tag. He was sentenced to \$5,268 in fines and restitution, loss of a hunting rifle and a lifetime revocation of hunting and fishing privileges.

Henley faced two charges, including attempting to kill elk during closed season and use of a tag of another. He was sentenced to \$2,333 in fines and restitution and a four-year revocation of hunting and fishing privileges.


More than \$16,000 in bond money was also forfeited.

Because Idaho is a member of the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact, all Idaho-issued hunting and fishing license revocations are honored by the other 35 member states, including the entire western United States.

In his comments to the three men, Hicks said “the law’s in place for all of us, whether you’re from Idaho, Australia or Timbuktu.” He then ordered all three to pay their fines before they left for home.

Despite the outcome of this particular case, the investigation continues. Fish and Game conservation officer Marshall Haynes said the Tasmanian hunters first came to his attention in the late 1990’s, when other hunters began reporting suspicious activity associated with the group.

“Mr. Kapeller and his associates have made dozens of hunting trips to Idaho during the past two decades,” Haynes said. “Our investigation continues, and we would very much appreciate hearing from anyone who might have information about animals killed by this group in the last few years.”

Persons with any information about suspected poaching activity are encouraged to call the Citizens Against Poaching hotline at 1-800-632-5999, 24 hours a day. Callers may remain anonymous. 

Magic Valley Region

Senior Conservation Officers Lee Garwood and Rob Morris assisted the Salmon Region with an investigation of a self-defense bear killed in Kane Creek. No enforcement action was taken.

Senior Conservation Officers Jim Stirling and Clint Rogers patrolled sturgeon angling near Pillar Falls on the Snake River. No violations were detected.

Senior Conservation Officer Greg Milner received copies of the final judgments on three of the four defendants in an elk spotlight/waste case. They received the following sentences:

Wrigley -

Count one: take elk with firearm in archery only season
\$400 fine + \$145 costs
2 years probation

Count two: wasteful destruction of an elk
\$400 fine + \$145 costs
\$750 civil penalty
180 days in jail with 178 suspended
48 hours of community service in exchange for the 2 days jail at his discretion
2 years probation concurrent with count one
1 year hunting and fishing license revocation

Cassey and Thaxton received the same sentence as Wrigley except they each got two-year hunting and fishing license revocations.

Plus Casey Fairchild didn’t show up to his sentencing hearing today so my judge issued a \$50,000 warrant. It is my understanding that he has already been picked up and is on his way to jail here as we speak. He will be arraigned tomorrow and have a hearing next Wednesday. My guess is he’ll be in jail until then because I don’t think he has access to \$50K. The judge asked for his criminal history and it includes convictions for DUI, theft, witness intimidation, reckless driving, several



traffic tickets and at least two probation violations. The offer on the table for him is a five-year hunting and fishing revocation and minimum fine (\$400) for using a firearm in an archery only season. No jail since he is going to already be in jail. My guess would be a significant amount of probation plus he has three years of state prison time hanging over his head for the felony witness intimidation.

All told, we are getting \$2,800 in fines, \$1,015 in costs, \$750 in civil penalties, 540 days in jail plus whatever time Fairchild has spent already, 144 hours of community service, probably 11 years of probation if Fairchild gets 3, and 10 years of hunting and fishing license revocations on this case. Thank you all for everything you did to see this case was a success. Chalk one up for the good guys!

Southeast Region



PARTY HUNT. On November 2, 2011 in Caribou County Magistrate Court, Judge David Kress presided over a case involving Alejandro Mejia-Rodriguez, a habitual wildlife violator. After accepting a plea of guilty to using the tag of another,

Judge Kress sentenced Mejia-Rodriguez to a \$545 fine, a 3 year suspension of hunting and fishing privileges, 2 years of probation, and 20 days of jail (suspended).

On October 11, 2011, a concerned citizen called to report a violation. The caller indicated that they had watched Mejia-Rodriguez load a 3-point mule deer buck into a pickup truck and were concerned that no tag was evident. A short investigation led to the discovery of the deer and a confession that the wrong tag was on the deer. Mejia-Rodriguez admitted that he had put his son's tag on the deer after killing it the evening of October 10th. This was the first day of the first year that his son was old enough to hunt. Mejia-Rodriguez was allowed to keep the deer but both his tag and his son's tag were seized as evidence in the case.

This isn't Mejia-Rodriguez's first time violating wildlife laws. In 2008 he was cited for shooting across a public highway while attempting to hunt Hungarian partridges out of his truck. In 2009 Mejia-Rodriguez pleaded guilty

to exceeding the bag limit and using the tag of another on an elk hunt he was involved with in 2008. Lastly, Mejia-Rodriguez was charged with and pled guilty to failing to stop and report at a check station in 2009.

Without a call from a concerned citizen this habitual wildlife violator would not have been caught and he would have likely killed another deer illegally. Many cases go unsolved every year because nobody witnesses the violation or no call is made.



WANNA POACH? THINK TWICE!

On November 10, 2011, District Conservation Officer Marc Porter received a phone call from a concerned citizen that they had heard several rifle shots and were concerned that somebody may be poaching deer

in the Hansel Mountains west of Malad, Idaho. Porter responded to the area and began patrolling with his ATV. During that patrol, he observed an older truck parked on the top of the mountain and with binoculars, saw two individuals handling a dead mule deer. When the suspects saw Porter, they threw the deer parts and attempted to leave the area. When contact with the two was made, they stated they were hunting coyotes but hadn't seen or killed anything. The two poachers were identified as Jonathon Rhodes of Garland, Utah and Kip Tolboe of Bear River City, Utah. Rhodes later admitted to shooting the 2-point buck and he was cited for taking a mule deer buck closed season. Tolboe was cited for possession of a closed season mule deer buck. A search of their vehicle revealed two high-powered rifles, two shotguns, a pistol, and a .22 rifle. The deer, along with Rhodes' rifle, were confiscated at the scene. Rhodes initially stated he needed the meat (although he had already legally killed a buck during the season) but then admitted that greed played a part in the poaching of the mule deer.

Both Rhodes and Tolboe appeared in Oneida County Court on November 22, 2011 in front of Magistrate Judge David L. Evans and pleaded guilty to the charges. Judge Evans sent a strong message to both individuals when he sentenced the two. Rhodes received a \$600 fine plus court costs, ½ of the civil penalty of a mule deer (\$200), ½ of the processing fee (\$37.50), a 3-year hunting license



revocation of which he cannot accompany anybody in the field, and a 3-day jail sentence. Tolboe received the same sentence as Rhodes.

Poaching in the state of Idaho can have serious consequences as Rhodes and Tolboe found out. Thanks to a concerned citizen, these two individuals have hopefully learned a valuable lesson.

HABITUAL ILLEGAL OUTFITTER AND GUIDE.

Sidney R. Davis, 46, of Soda Springs, Idaho, was sentenced December 7th, to 30 months in prison, 3 years of supervised probation and \$40,000 in restitution. The stiff sentence was handed down by United States District Court Judge Lynn Winmill for violating the Lacey Act by operating an unlicensed outfitting and guiding business and making a false declaration in a bankruptcy proceeding. Upon his release from prison, Davis must serve three years of supervised release during which he is prohibited from hunting or fishing, accompanying others hunting or fishing, or providing services related to hunting or fishing, anywhere in the world.

Idaho law requires that outfitters and guides maintain a valid license issued by the Idaho Outfitter's and Guide's Licensing Board (IOGLB). Davis, who has owned and operated the Trail Creek Lodge near Soda Springs, Idaho, since approximately 1993, was once licensed as an outfitter and a guide. On July 26, 1996, the IOGLB revoked Davis' licenses after he admitted violating Idaho outfitting and guiding regulations. On November 19, 1998, Davis was convicted of two Lacey Act violations based on his role in illegal hunts at the Trail Creek Lodge.

Davis' career in illegal outfitting, guiding and poaching has spanned nearly two decades. Over those two decades three search warrants have been served on the Trail Creek Lodge and numerous violations of federal and state law have been investigated, observed and cited. Judge Winmill stated, "Without some prison time, I am convinced Mr. Davis will go back to business as usual."


Upper Snake Region

OFFICER SAFETY REMINDER!

Senior Conservation Officer Shane Liss

Most days as a Fish and Game officer on patrol go by without incident. When officers carry out month after month of patrols without anything out of the norm, we tend to get complacent. We get lazy about paying attention to behavior and body language clues from the public we interact with. I bring this subject up as a reminder that nothing in our job is "routine." Recently, I made a "routine" compliance check on an angler that ended with the discovery of a concealed revolver, an arrest warrant, and aggravated assault charges.

The compliance check started out with clues of the suspect displaying evasive body language and behavior that we as officers are trained to pick up on. When I first pulled onto the site and exited my vehicle, the male suspect looked in my direction and quickly went back to fishing, choosing to ignore my presence. As I approached him from behind, I asked how the fishing was going. He never once turned to face me. I quickly changed my approach to get to where I could see his hands and face. Within seconds of me closing the contact distance, he finally acknowledged me as a Fish and Game officer. Although he was now conversing to me while searching for his license, he still remained extremely fidgety. The suspect was only able to produce a valid ID card for identification.

I directed the suspect to stand at the rear of his vehicle so I would have a clear view while doing a driver's check via the radio. As I started to issue a citation for fail to produce a fishing license, dispatch relayed he had an outstanding warrant with an officer safety alert for aggravated assault. As I was making the physical arrest, the suspect stated he remembered his license was in his car and asked if he could get it. I advised him we were only going to deal with the warrant for now. Once I had him in custody and waiting for a deputy to transport the suspect, I conducted a search of the reach areas inside his vehicle. There I discovered a loaded .22 caliber revolver located inside his fishing creel bag on the passenger seat. 



Being an avid waterfowl hunter, Senior Conservation Officer Lauren Wendt enjoys working the youth waterfowl hunt and she loves seeing the next generation of waterfowl hunters in the field. What she doesn't like seeing is when adults take that opportunity away from youth by hunting during the youth season. Wendt observed Mr. Ethington duck hunting during the youth season. Upon contacting Mr. Ethington at his truck, he denied hunting. What Mr. Ethington didn't know was the observation Wendt had seen earlier. She then asked him to produce the duck he hid in the toolbox as well as the shotgun in the back seat. Eventually Mr. Ethington admitted to shooting the duck, knowing that as an adult he was not permitted to hunt during the youth season. Mr. Ethington was issued a citation for taking a duck closed season and an unlawful possession. As these were Mr. Ethington's 9th and 10th fish and game violations in Idaho, he was sentenced to pay a fine of \$245, 30 days suspended jail, and 1 year hunting license revocation, including probation for 1 year wherein he cannot accompany any hunters in the field.

During the archery elk season Senior Conservation Officer Lauren Wendt came upon a vehicle that had some elk quarters in the back of it. She was able to establish that the truck owner did not have an elk tag or an archery permit. She decided to wait at the trailhead for the owner of the vehicle to come back. It wasn't long before she saw two men coming down the trail with pack frames loaded with elk quarters and a bull elk head. When asking the men how their hunt was, the owner of the vehicle said he had shot the bull with his bow at about 8:00 a.m. that morning out of a treestand. She asked to look at his license and tag. Looking at the tag she noticed it was purchased at 1:11 p.m. that afternoon and that he also did not have an archery permit validation. Upon questioning the hunter, he admitted to buying the tag after he had shot the bull elk. Wendt seized the elk meat, head and antlers, and the bow he used to shoot the elk. The hunter was issued citations for possession of an unlawfully taken elk, hunting without a tag, hunting without an archery permit validation, and a warning for failing to leave evidence of sex naturally attached.

Good game wardens are always on the lookout. While enjoying some time off on a Sunday afternoon, Senior Conservation Officer Andrew Sorensen and the Regional Investigator (RI) launched a drift boat on the South Fork

of the Snake River for some fall fly fishing. Halfway through their float they saw a group of hunters in a jet boat heading upstream with hunter orange and shotguns. They continued to float downstream and saw the same group of hunters pass them up headed downstream in their jet boat. The hunters parked their boat about 1/4 mile down from Sorensen and the RI, and jumped on shore with their guns. A few minutes later as Sorensen and the RI passed them, they heard a blast from a shotgun. While they suspected that the hunters had killed something, they were unable to confirm it since they could not go back upstream in their drift boat. Well, lucky for the officers, the RI forgot his truck keys and had to wait for the shuttle. The suspected hunters arrived at the same boat ramp after dark and Sorensen and the RI contacted them with an untagged white-tailed deer. They cited the individual who shot the deer and another hunter in the group was issued a warning for not having the correct tag for the unit. Sometimes it pays off to bring your badge and a ticket book along on those evening fishing trips!

Senior Conservation Officer Andrew Sorensen was able to apprehend a spotlighter this fall. District Conservation Officer Doug Petersen first observed spotlighting activity shortly after dark and was able to watch the suspect work the spotlight for nearly 20 minutes before Sorensen and Senior Conservation Officer Josh Koontz were able to get into position to make the contact. The officers contacted the suspect in possession of a warm spotlight and an uncased firearm. The suspect admitted to using the spotlight, but insisted that he was not shining for deer; rather he was trying to find the road because his headlights were not functioning properly. This case is in the pre-trial stage in Madison County



that had been shot and buried under snow and branches. No suspects yet.

Senior Conservation Officer Charlie Anderson found quite a few animals killed illegally this past fall, one of which include a mule deer buck



Senior Conservation Officers Andrew Sorensen and Tony Imthurn had a mountain lion shot and killed near the Sugar City limits during the closed season.



Senior Conservation Officer Andrew Sorensen discovered interesting photos of a known violator, Garrett Mott, with a harvested black bear from the Clearwater Region this spring. The pictures showed Garrett Mott, formerly of Rexburg now living in Utah, posing with hunting hounds and his harvested black bear. There was no doubt in Sorensen's mind that Mott had used the hounds in his pursuit of his bear. A quick check of our license records showed that Mr. Mott had not acquired his nonresident hound hunter permit to pursue bears on his hunt. A phone call to Mr. Mott resulted in a confession for not having the proper permit at the time he harvested his black bear. Mr. Mott agreed to appear in Madison County court in October where Magistrate Judge Mark Rammell revoked his hunting privileges for 1 year and fined him \$395.

Senior Conservation Officer Andrew Sorensen traveled to the Yankee Fork near Challis to assist on a case that Senior Conservation Officer Andy Smith and the Regional Investigator requested help with. Initially he thought he was only needed to help translate for the Spanish speaking suspects, but he was able to assist the officers in a plain clothes capacity. Acting as a hunter on the hillside, Sorensen was able to contact the suspects in the act as they hauled their illegally harvested elk off of the mountain and back to camp. With this evidence, officers were able to obtain a search warrant

for the suspect's camp. Sorensen was able to translate throughout the execution of the search warrant. The officers ended up seizing numerous illegal deer and elk and close to 70 citations and warnings were written and documented on five suspects.

Fall trapping in Island Park was high again. Working with IDFG-FS Biologist Bryan Aber, Senior Conservation Officer Josh Koontz caught a major player in illegal trapping in Island Park. The trapper had over 30 illegal traps out. With reports of trap thefts on the rise in the Island Park area, Koontz also placed cameras on some traps in hopes of catching someone stealing a trap.

Thanks to help from the Regional Investigator (RI) and Senior Conservation Officers Andrew Sorensen and Lew Huddleston, Senior Conservation Officer Tony Imthurn was able to follow up on information about a violator group taking over-limits of sage grouse. They used undercover efforts and surveillance tactics to successfully make the case. While Sorensen checked the group in the morning with sage grouse limits, the RI, Huddleston and Imthurn followed them in the afternoon, catching them "double-dipping" on their bag limits of grouse. Among the interesting facts is the violators used a different vehicle for their afternoon trip. They had a blatant disregard for the regulations as they shot from the vehicle and exceeded their bag limits. Officers spent more than three hours in the afternoon observing their activities before stopping them just before dark.

Another case that is just beginning to go through the Jefferson County court system started with a call of a shot and wasted pronghorn antelope doe in a field near Mud Lake. Senior Conservation Officer Tony Imthurn investigated the scene and discovered a wasted mule deer buck in the field nearby. Next to the mule deer laid a partial bank statement with just enough information to secure a search warrant for the bank records. As a result, Imthurn and Senior Conservation Officer Lew Huddleston conducted interviews with five people involved and obtained confessions on their involvement with the two wasted animals. Both animals had been spotlighted, run down in a pickup and killed with use of a shotgun.



As always a few wasted animals have popped up, most noticeably on the Sand Creek desert, as a result of wounding losses from people shooting into elk herds or killing more animals than they had tags to fill. Among the wasted animals was a nice 6x6 bull elk in October, killed near the Juniper Mountains and a white-tailed buck killed near the Henrys Fork. The whitetail had been shot from a road with a rifle when two archers in a nearby blind heard the shots. Unfortunately, there are no leads on either case at this time.



District Conservation Officer Mark Carson received a call about a possible trespassing on the river near Heise. The witness provided a vehicle description and a license plate number. The witness thought that one of the groups killed a deer. A check of the vehicle owner revealed that he had an Idaho hunting license but did not have a tag valid for the unit. Carson interviewed the hunter regarding the trespass issue, wherein he said that he had killed a white-tailed doe and that it “was at a friend’s house.” He did not want to give up the name of the friend and said that he needed to leave. Carson told him that as soon as he saw the deer they would be done. He ultimately relented and said the deer was in his shed. He produced the deer with an unvalidated tag. The deer was seized and he was issued a citation. The rest of the story...

Senior Conservation Officer Andrew Sorenson and the Regional Investigator (RI) were watching this individual for killing a sow bear with cubs, failing to remove his bear bait and attempt to overlimit. The officers had set up a video camera on one of his baits. They got some great video of him sitting over his bear bait. After citing

him for the deer and questioning him about his bear hunting he denied sitting with a bow or even hunting over his baits. When asked what he would say if we had a photo of him on the bait, he said, “I might have been there but I never had a bow.” When asked what he would think if we had a photo of him with sitting in a treestand with a bow he said, “I would like to see that.” So, Sorenson showed the video of him climbing the stand and sitting with an arrow nocked on his bow. He plead guilty to the deer charges, and the case on the bear hunting and baiting charges are pending..... great work Carson, Sorenson and RI.

Salmon Region

Senior Conservation Officers Matt Sheppard and Dane Cook are continuing to work the doe deer that was shot and left up Carmen and are making some headway.

Connecting Youth

Panhandle Region

Regional Conservation Officer Craig Walker

It is a real struggle to schedule time with my 14-year-old daughter Sara. A freshman at Coeur d’Alene high school, her social calendar is very full. Volleyball, dance, school, homework (sometimes), and “just hanging with friends” make for tough competition. She enjoys deer hunting and shot her first deer, a mule deer doe, last fall. This fall though, it has been difficult to schedule any time to take her out. I have permission to hunt a piece of private property that is perfect for kids. We had squeezed in a couple of end-of-the-day, two hour hunts, but had been unsuccessful.

The day after Thanksgiving, we walked in to our blind just as it was getting light enough to see well. We had been sitting for just a few minutes with Sara reading a book and me playing Angry Birds (sound muted, of course) on my phone. I heard a deer grunt off to the right of the blind. At the same time Sara nudged me to look and see a white-tailed buck burst out of the brush and into the field, running, with his nose to the ground like a dog. As she got her rifle into position, I bleated at




the buck trying to imitate a doe. It worked! The buck slammed on the brakes and gave us a perfect broadside view at about 75 yards. Sara fired a shot but the buck just stood there, unhit and unsure of what had just happened. That made three of us! As the buck turned and started to jog off, Sara got another round chambered. I bleated again and the buck stopped and turned broadside again. This time I whispered what I hoped were useful words, as she got back into the scope. "Put the crosshairs where you know they belong, and gently press the trigger." This time I saw the hit; a good lung shot. The deer spun around and was gone, into the brushy woods.

Starting where we had seen the deer enter the woods we had difficulty finding any sign...no blood, and no tracks on the frozen ground. After about 15 minutes of making widening circles through the thick brush, Sara had convinced herself that she had missed. "How long will we keep looking," she asked. I told her that I had seen where the deer was hit and I knew it did not live for more than a few seconds. We would keep looking until we found it. She understood our responsibility as ethical hunters to continue the search. I understood the pressure to reinforce those ethics and to ensure my daughter's future as a hunter by FINDING THAT DEER! It took another five minutes or so, but we finally found her deer piled up in the brush, very dead. It had gone about 150 yards, just far enough to add a little drama to the scene. Regarding drama, we both guessed that the first bullet probably went right where she had been looking... between the antlers. Not only had Sara shot her first white-tailed deer, but it was a very nice buck as well. This was one proud and happy hunter.



I don't know if Sara will continue to hunt. Many things will draw her attention away from hunting, as is the case

with so many young people. Nevertheless, this hunt was an experience that we shared and I know neither of us will forget it. 

Magic Valley Region

Senior Conservation Officer Doug Meyer assisted Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge staff and the Minidoka Bowmen at Lake Walcott State Park with an informal big game archery shooting day. The activity was designed for the novice shooter to learn more about archery and just get some shooting in.

Senior Conservation Officer Meghan Roos assisted Hunter Ed/Volunteer Coordinator Clayton Nielson with a women's hunting clinic at the Jerome Fish and Game range.

Senior Conservation Officer Lee Garwood mentored a Wood River senior high student with his senior project.

Senior conservation officers worked 31 hours on four hunter education classes in the region.

Senior Conservation Officer Doug Meyer organized a youth mentored pheasant hunting clinic at a licensed shooting preserve near Malta east of Burley. Regional



Conservation Officer Gary Hompland and Regional Supervisor Jerome Hansen assisted with classes about field dressing and cooking upland birds. Senior Conservation Officer Clint Rogers and the Regional Investigator assisted with mentoring hunters. Additional volunteers included dog handlers and shooting



instructors. Pheasants Forever, Intermountain Taxidermy, and the landowner donated pen-reared birds, a certificate for mounting, and a shotgun for raffle.



Southeast Region

District Conservation Officer Marc Porter and Senior Conservation Officers Chris Bocek and Tyler Peterson, along with more than 80 other law enforcement officers from around the Southeast Region participated in the annual “Shop with a Cop” sponsored by the Bannock County Sheriff’s Department, SEICCA and Shopko.



Their combined efforts made Christmas a little bit brighter for 96 local children.



Upper Snake Region



Officers participated in kids fishing clinics in Victor, Swan Valley, Rexburg, Ashton and Island Park as well as taking kids out on youth pheasant hunts. Arriving early, the kids also had the opportunity to release the birds before the hunt.

Senior Conservation Officer Lauren Wendt spent two days helping Friends of the Teton River teaching 5th and 6th graders about how healthy water systems are important for a variety of wildlife that use wetland and riparian habitats. Officers were also busy at local schools teaching about wildlife and their habitats.

Senior Conservation Officer Shane Liss organized two youth-mentored elk hunting field trips for two local kids.

One of those hunters turned twelve within a week of her first-ever elk hunt. Liss made arrangements with her father to take her on a horseback elk hunting trip to Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area where Liss had seen some elk a few days before. Little

did she know her first elk hunt would be filled with lots of smiles, laughs, excitement, frustration, tired feet and sore muscles, and not necessarily in that order. She was successful with her first-ever cow elk hunting experience.



Salmon Region

Senior Conservation Officer Matt Sheppard pulled off another successful youth waterfowl hunt. It was a two day clinic with five kids and a number of volunteers. Job well done!



Senior Conservation Officer Ryan Hilton picked up the South Dakota officer, Mark, and they promptly took a young girl on her first deer hunt bagging a nice little white-tailed doe.

News From the Field

Panhandle Region

On September 16, 2011, we had a grizzly bear related human mortality. In a very remote part of Game Unit 1, three men were bear hunting. They were very close to the Montana border, but carried bear tags from both states. The men knew grizzly bears were in the area, and reported having seen one earlier that day. Two of the men observed a large, dark-colored bear grazing in the open bear grass meadow. They watched the bear for some time, and decided it was a large, black bear. One man shot the bear, and the two of them watched it disappear into the brush, obviously hit. The two waited for about half an hour before following the bear. As soon as the first man entered the brushy area, the wounded bear ambushed him, grabbing him by the upper arm, and dragging him down the hill. The man's partner fired several shots at the bear, as it dragged its victim. The bear finally dropped the man, crawled a few feet and died. The stricken hunter died a few minutes later. An autopsy later revealed that the victim actually died from a gunshot wound. A tragic accident; one of the bullets fired during the attack passed through the bear, and into the man's chest.

The bear was an unusually dark-colored grizzly that weighed about 450 pounds. It is interesting to note that both men involved in this incident had taken a bear identification course, as Montana required it, for hunting in that part of the state.

Officers from the Boundary County Sheriff's Department, Mineral County (Montana) Sheriff's Department, Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG), US Border Patrol, USFS, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks all converged on the scene. The initial reports were that the incident was very close to the border between Idaho and Montana, and that it was not clear which state would

be responsible for the investigation. Montana sent their Wildlife Human Attack Response Team (WHART), which is designed to properly investigate critical interactions between dangerous wildlife and humans. IDFG Senior Conservation Officers Greg Johnson and Brian Johnson (no relation) also responded, one on foot and one on horseback, to the remote attack location.

Because of this tragedy, we have taken major steps towards setting up our own WHART, on a statewide level, with team members in each region. Montana's WHART system is a version of what British Columbia has been using for years, and we will be adapting it to fit our needs during the upcoming year.

Clearwater Region

Hikers need help making way out of rough country


Reprinted with permission from the Lewiston Tribune.

Two people who hiked into rough country had to be escorted out after two rescuers hiked in to them to provide water and assistance.

"They got down in an area that was a little hotter and steeper than they anticipated, I think, and ran out of fluids and were having a difficult time getting out," Nez Perce County Chief Deputy Alan Johnson said Tuesday.

The two men, Lynn Ruffing, 60, of Estacada, Oregon and Timothy Petchell, 46, of Milwaukie, Oregon hiked down into Dough Creek in the breaks of the Snake River after dark Sunday night, leaving a third person on top of the ridge. That person called authorities when they ran into difficulties, Johnson said.

Deputy Chris Brown and Idaho Fish and Game officer Rick Cooper hiked about 1 1/2 to 2 miles down to the two men, taking extra fluids with them. They discussed calling a helicopter in, but the two decided they could hike out, Johnson said. "So the two officers carried their packs and were able to hike them out."

The sheriff's office was notified about 3:30 Monday afternoon, and it was almost 9:30 when everyone was out of the canyon, he said. 



District Conservation Officer George Fischer reports that the highlight of his week was taking a morning break with his daughter where she was able to get her first deer. "It was a great hunt and no easy task. I'm really proud of her."



Senior Conservation Officers Roy Kinner and Chad Wippermann are out of the area doing sheep capture and jet boat training. Senior Conservation Officer Roger Westfall is up at Moose Creek on horse patrol in the Selway for a few days. District Conservation Officer George Fischer will tag along with Senior Conservation Officer Lucas Swanson to work the Magruder Corridor.



Senior Conservation Officer Mike Dafoe assisted Latah County with a lost hunter call on Saturday night. The hunters were reported to be in Hatter Creek but were found in Flat Creek by a deputy. The county needed Dafoe's keys to get in behind a gate to get to the hunter.

Senior Conservation Officers Roy Kinner and Chad Wippermann boated up the Salmon River from the Main Salmon River road to assist with sheep capture and patrol backcountry camps. They had great success on sheep and got 12 radio collars out. For the first time

in Kinner's career of working the area, they never saw a live deer. He also never checked a dead deer. Camp numbers were down but several groups were just moving in this week.

Senior Conservation Officer Rick Cooper took Wildlife folks up the river early in the week to help recover a sheep collar and reported that the climb was a tough one - even completely blowing out another pair of boots! We not only need a budget from Wildlife for Snake River trips but maybe one for Coops boots.

Magic Valley

District Conservation Officer Mike Stoddard backpacked approximately 700 grayling fry into Independence Lakes near Burley.



Senior Conservation Officer Doug Meyer assisted Magic Valley Fisheries

Manager Doug Megargle rescue a Snake River White Sturgeon from a canal near the Minikoda Dam after the canal had been de-watered. The fish was relocated to the Snake River below the dam.

Senior Conservation Officers Steve Roberts and Lee Garwood both spent time dealing with bear complaints. Roberts set a culvert trap for a chronic bear issue at the Baumgartner Campground. The bear captured was a repeat offender and euthanized. A bear at the Wood River Campground reportedly swatted a tent doing some damage to the tent but no personal injury.

District Conservation Officer Tim Ferguson and Senior Conservation Officers Steve Roberts, Lee Garwood, Greg



Milner, Meghan Roos, and Rob Morris assisted regional staff with pronghorn antelope surveys in their respective patrol areas.


Senior Conservation Officers Rob Morris and Lee Garwood traveled to Stanley to assist Senior Conservation Officer Meritt Horsman with chemical immobilization and ear tagging of a trapped problem black bear.

Senior Conservation Officers Rich Holman, Lee Garwood, and Steve Roberts assisted regional fisheries staff with electro-fishing for population estimates of bull trout on the South Fork Boise River.

Senior Conservation Officer Steve Roberts assisted Regional Nongame Biologist Rob Lonsinger with tundra swan surveys on the Camas Prairie.

Regional Conservation Officer Gary Hompland conducted two apprentice falconry inspections in the Twin Falls and Rupert areas.

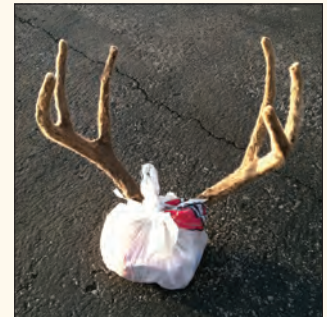
Senior Conservation Officer Jim Stirling received the following message from Jil Nichols, POST K-9 Coordinator:

“I just wanted to let you know that I have received your K-9 certification paperwork for your Tracking and Evidence Search certifications. I spoke with the evaluator, Rick VanVooren, who conducted your certification tests. He had nothing but GREAT things to say about you and K-9 Pepper. He was so excited for you and your agency. He was also excited to be the one fortunate enough to evaluate the very first Fish and Game dog in the state of Idaho! I, too, am very excited to have you on board as a fellow K-9 handler. If you are ever in the Meridian area, please stop by as I would love to learn more about your program and what your dog can do. It is something completely different than the other K-9 disciplines. Congratulation on your certification!” 

Southeast Region

“SHE BUCKS” Regional Conservation Officer Blake Phillips received two separate phone calls on October 19th and again on October 20th regarding two different

hunters who had taken velvet antlered deer that were does not bucks. Examination of the animals revealed a three-point and a two-point velvet antlered doe, both harvested in the Bear Lake Valley within a mile of each other. Samples were taken from each animal and lab results identified both animals as “hermaphrodites” or animals that carry both female and male reproductive organs.



Hermaphrodites occur in nearly all species but are very rare and seldom seen in big game populations. To find two in one area harvested within days of each other makes you wonder what is in the water in Bear Lake. The hunters were originally concerned if their animals were legal. They were assured that all that is required during an antlered-only season is for the deer to have at least one antler longer than three inches no matter if it is female or male.



Upper Snake Region

Grizzly bear complaints were on the rise once again this fall. Several hunter/grizzly bear incidents were reported with one attack on a hunter investigated by officers. Two elk archery hunters, while archery hunting, spooked a grizzly bear out of a day bed. The bear knocked over one hunter while biting briefly at him as it ran by. That brief encounter lead to a life flight trip to the emergency room for the hunter, where he fortunately only lost a finger and suffered some serious stitches to his arm.



This incident spurred the activation of the Upper Snake Region WHART (Wildlife-Human Attack Response Team) which responded to the scene for investigation.

Officers assisted the Wildlife Bureau in a moose collaring project in the Island Park area. As you can see, sometimes the moose goes down in the darndest places. Officers and biologists were up to the challenge.



Blast From The Past

Retired Regional Conservation Officer Jeff Wolfe

THE HONORABLE BOSS HOGG.

Back in '82 when I first hired on with the Department, I was assigned to work for Don Beach in Boise. As any new employee would normally do, I asked around to see what kind of man Don was and how he supervised. I vividly remember one individual's comment, "he's a real hard *** supervisor and is only law enforcement oriented." With that comment planted in my mind, I finally got to meet Don. My first impression was that he physically looked like he could be the hard *** previously described, being big and burly, having a boisterous voice, sporting a neatly trimmed beard and above all, having a totally hairless shaved head. I have to admit that I felt a bit intimidated when I first met Don as he gave me my first set of work instructions.

As I started into my solo field assignment I made all the common mistakes committed by most new probationary

officers. Don very patiently got me out of each mess and set me back on the right track. It was during these early months that I quickly realized that Don was a very unselfish, caring, and sincere individual who was always willing to do anything within reason to make things right for his officers, their families, and the general public.

I also found that Don was well-liked and respected by those individuals that had the pleasure of working with him. Don quickly won my utmost respect and friendship for his totally humanistic style and his superior technical expertise in the field of wildlife law enforcement.

When it came to catching violators, Don was a top gun. He was usually "slicker" than they (the poachers) were and had an uncanny ability to think quickly on his feet when it came to formulating tactics to apprehend violators red-handed. In my opinion, there was no better role model or teacher to learn the wildlife business from.

"Boss Hog" yes, that was Don's official district appointed nickname, and I might add, he was proud of it. In fact we used his nickname so much that my four-year-old daughter, Becky, thought Boss Hog was Don's real name. Don thoroughly enjoyed coming by my house and being greeted with an affectionate, "Hello, Boss Hog," as my daughter reached up to give him a big hug. Don would get this distinct sparkle in his eye and would grin from ear to ear as he reached down like a big teddy bear to give little Becky a big hug.

During my career with this agency, I have had the opportunity of working with some mighty fine people. However, Don was by far the most energetic, enthusiastic and dedicated wildlife professional I have ever known. I will truly miss working with Don, but have some great memories of being with him at times he was at his best, enjoying life and the job.

I could easily write hundreds of pages reflecting both work and recreational experiences I have had the pleasure of sharing with Don, but would like to share a little story that is somewhat humorous and a good representation of the Don we all loved and respected.

This story took place during the peak of the deer season. Don and I had set up a check station on the Owyhee



County turnpike (Mud Flat Road). Everything was going smoothly until this pickup truck approached and briskly accelerated instead of stopping. Don and I quickly jumped into his truck, as all of our check station signs blew over, and started in hot pursuit of the violator's vehicle.

Once rolling, I activated Don's siren and plugged in his portable dash-mount blue light, which worked fine for about 20 seconds, then it ceased to function. As we closed in behind the violator at 80 mph, Don took his fist and briskly struck the dashboard as he cussed something at the non-functioning blue light. The light quickly responded to Don's direction and began to function again. About this time, a marble-sized rock hammered our windshield and Don cussed again, but not at the blue light, followed with an assertively stated, "We better catch this guy now!"

The blue light went out again, and the same previously mentioned routine was followed, cuss, hit and go. This routine continued about every 20 seconds as we comically chased this guy down the road at 80 mph taking turns cussing and slamming our fists on the dashboard with ever increasing intensity to keep the blue light activated. Several times between the cussing and the dashboard pounding, I remember both of us saying to each other, "why doesn't this guy stop?"

About 20 miles and two rocks in the windshield later, with the assistance of the Owyhee County Sheriff's Office, we managed to forcibly stop and arrest the violator. At the conclusion of the chase, Don and I were pretty pumped up and intense, but shortly thereafter began joking with each other about Don's inability to drive and dodge rocks or take care of his blue light.

After joking around to let off steam, we both realized what was truly the funniest part of the whole incident. It was our continually asking each other during the chase, "why doesn't this guy stop?" Then we mentally reversed our roles and place ourselves in the violator's shoes to see it from his perspective.

Don and I envisioned ourselves stressfully fleeing from the authority of the law down some isolated country road at 80 mph, looking in our rearview mirror to see two

physically large and obviously enraged authoritarians all dressed in green, screaming obscenities and showing their displeasure about the situation by continually pounding their fists on the dashboard of their vehicle in an ever intensifying and aggressive manner as the chase endured. At the conclusion of our role reversal, the blue light came on, as we both chuckled and realized that nobody but a stupid person would have stopped with the previously described set of circumstances hot on their tailgate. It was great!

I shared only one of the great times I had the privilege of spending with a truly great man and friend. To my knowledge, Don never actually received any of the high profile enforcement awards, but earned and deserved them every year I worked with him. He always gave a 100 percent effort for Idaho's wildlife and its citizenry and his contributions have positively been felt by all. Speaking for the others that knew Don, I can safely say, in our hearts, Don won every conceivable award.

Boss Hog will always be a positive part of my life and will continue to bring a smile to my face each time I think about him. Boss Hog was one of the best people God ever place on this earth and was truly a class act we should all try to follow.

Your friend, Jeff 

In Memory of Don Beach

**District Conservation Officer
February 1973 - January 1992**